

Memorandum

Date: February 25, 2003

To: NRP Policy Board Members and Alternates
Members of the Minneapolis City Council

From: Robert D. Miller, Director, NRP

Subject: Executive Summary of the Report of the "Focus Minneapolis" Working Group

On September 23, 2002 the NRP Policy Board established a working group to "Evaluate "Focus Minneapolis" and develop implementation options that protect the integrity of neighborhoods in neighborhood planning" The Group was open to all Policy Board members and alternates. At its first meeting the Group was expanded to include additional City of Minneapolis staff representatives and address the charge from the City Council's Focus Minneapolis resolution of September 13 to "Evaluate incorporation of the functions of NRP into the CPED structure".

The Working Group met nine times and the following individuals participated in at least four of the Groups nine meetings (an attendance summary is included in Attachment A to the full report):

Policy Board Members and Alternates:

- Greg Bastien - Neighborhood Representative Alternate
- Julia Burman – Neighborhood Representative Alternate
- Debbie Evans- Neighborhood Representative Alternate
- Diane Hofstede – Public Official Member
- Carol Pass – Neighborhood Representative
- Judy Schwartau – Former Neighborhood Representative Alternate

City Representatives:

- Bob Cooper – MCDA
- David Fey – Office of the Mayor
- Joyce Rhyen – Planning Department
- Jeff Schneider – CPED

The following results were achieved by the Working Group:

1. **The members of the Group agreed that both NRP and the City of Minneapolis share the following values:**
 - **Neighborhood organizations should have a central role in planning.**
 - **City and neighborhood planning should include active participation by other jurisdictions, neighborhood organizations, and other constituencies and address their concerns and plans.**
2. **The Group determined that the functions of NRP include, but are not limited to:**
 - **Facilitating and assisting with development of neighborhood action plans**
 - **Providing dollars and professional/technical staff that support neighborhoods**
 - **Facilitating inter and intra governmental and inter sector communication and coordination through the Policy Board**
 - **Implementing approved neighborhood action plans. This includes:**
 - Setting priorities for implementation
 - Establishing the scopes of service and budgets for activities carried out by neighborhoods (NRP staff)
 - Establishing the scopes of service and budgets for activities carried out by departments (neighborhoods and public staff)
 - Bringing players together on interjurisdictional and inter sector activities
 - Trouble shooting contracts in process and being implemented
 - Integrating multi-jurisdictional and inter sector efforts
 - Facilitating collaboration development
 - Facilitating and making plan modifications
 - **Helping neighborhoods navigate city and other jurisdictions during the plan development and implementation processes**
 - **Educating and informing neighborhood organizations and residents about the city, city programs, city processes and the MCDA role in development activities.**
 - **Engaging and actively involving the community in planning at the neighborhood level.**
 - **Organizing and building the capacity of neighborhoods to perform community-based planning.**
 - **Developing and building citizenship and leadership in neighborhoods.**
 - **Identifying new solutions, strategies, and policies and moving them forward.**
 - **Facilitate the sharing of information and knowledge across neighborhood boundaries.**
 - **Redirecting governmental resources to neighborhood priorities.**
 - **Early and continuing identification of resident priorities.**
 - **Supporting the testing of innovations proposed by neighborhoods.**

3. The Group identified ways neighborhood participation in city decisions involving budgets, programs, projects, services, processes and goals and objectives could be institutionalized.

Citizen and neighborhood engagement was addressed very extensively and warrants the reader's attention in the full report. The general feeling of the Group was that the City needed to act more aggressively to engage citizens in all of its activities and not just NRP. Some of the ways that neighborhoods should be institutionalized into the City's decision-making processes included:

For Budgets:

- Reviewing approved Neighborhood Action Plans as part of the capital budget and CLIC processes
- Setting aside 10% of departmental budgets for strategies contained in approved Neighborhood Action Plans
- Simplifying the budget calendar and publicizing points of impact where resident and neighborhood organization comment and participation would have the most meaning
- Providing opportunities for neighborhood organizations to initiate budget proposals for neighborhood projects/priorities and providing an annual report to neighborhoods on the outcomes from neighborhood initiated budget proposals

For Programs:

- Requiring all city departments to provide neighborhoods with the opportunity to review and comment on new or revised programs prior to any action by the City Council
- Establishing a unified review and comment policy and standards for city wide policies and procedures
- Educating neighborhood associations and maintaining communication with them on available and planned programs
- Having city staff review Neighborhood Action Plans for consistency with existing programs

For Projects:

- Actively involving neighborhoods in development cycle decisions
- Developing and providing resources for a truly empowered citizen participation process that can effectively review projects

- Creating clear lines of access to decision making

For Service Delivery:

- Actively involve neighborhoods in program design and delivery decisions
- Improving the process for developing and implementing contracts with Departments
- Developing Neighborhood Report Cards for evaluating City service delivery
- Keeping dollars and other resources at the neighborhood level

For Processes:

- Developing process time lines that are known and predictable
- Adopting processes that are appropriate, widely known and followed
- Ensuring that any process encourages empowerment

For Goals and Objectives:

- Identifying important issues that need public discussion and input
- Conducting meetings with neighborhood organizations that educate them as well as ask for their opinion
- Using Neighborhood Action Plans and neighborhood level data collection efforts to identify "common themes"
- Conducting well publicized neighborhood and community meetings with ample lead time when Goals have been narrowed down and priorities need to be established (i.e. when resident input will make a difference)

4. The Group determined how NRP functions and neighborhood participation in Budgets, Programs, Projects, Services, Processes and Goals and Objectives could best be institutionalized and supported. It addressed:

- Governance
- Funding/Financial Support
- Staff Support

To arrive at its conclusions the members identified Pros and Cons, developed and discussed the Options, reviewed results, clarified and sometimes reconsidered decisions and worked to provide the Policy Board, City Council and Mayor with a system that they felt could perform the functions of NRP while protecting the integrity of neighborhoods in neighborhood planning. Each member was allowed to provide Pros and Cons for each of the Options. After the Pros and Cons had been noted, each member assigned a preference to each Option. They did this by affixing a colored preference Dot (Red=1, Green=2, Orange=3, Yellow=4, Small Orange=5, and Blue=6) to each Option. Red was to go to the most preferred Option, Green to the second, etc. The objective was to find the Option with the **lowest** score. The number of dots used was equal to the number of Options being considered (i.e. three options, three dots). Only one dot could be used per option and all dots had to be used.

The Director of NRP, who facilitated the meetings of the group, did not take part in the discussion, provide Pros and Cons or vote on the Options.

The options considered, and the order of preference, were as follows:

- **Governance**

Option 1: NRP Policy Board remains independent a) as currently structured or b) with elected neighborhood representatives constituting 50% of the members

5 Red, 1 Green, and 2 Orange = **13**

This option was clearly preferred among the choices considered.

Option 2: Expand/merge the Policy Board with the Planning Commission with: a) the same ratio of elected neighborhood representatives to other members as presently exists on the Policy Board; b) elected neighborhood representatives constituting 50% of the members or c) the Policy Board as a subcommittee of the Planning Commission.

3 Red, 1 Green, and 4 Orange = **17**

Option 3: Dissolve the Policy Board and delegate responsibility for approval of NRP plans to the elected officials of each jurisdiction.

0 Red, 6 Green, and 2 Orange = **18**

- **Funding/Financial Support**

Option 1: Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* significant “discretionary” dollars (i.e. the status quo).

(First Vote) 4 Red, 0 Green, 0 Orange, 0 Yellow, 1 Small Orange, and 2 Blue = **21**

(Second Vote) 4 Red, 0 Green, and 3 Orange = **13**

Option 2: Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* some “discretionary” dollars (i.e. less than the current amounts but more than for admin only)

(First Vote) 0 Red, 3 Green, 2 Orange, 1 Yellow, 1 Small Orange, and 0 Blue = **21**

(Second Vote)

0 Red, 7 Green, and 0 Orange for a total =14

Option 3: Funding for neighborhood capacity only

(First Vote) 3 Red, 0 Green, 1 Orange, 1 Yellow, 1 Small Orange, and 1 Blue = 21

(Second Vote)

3 Red, 0 Green, and 4 Orange = 15

The results showed a slight preference for “Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* significant “discretionary” dollars (i.e. the status quo)” and clearly reflected the differences in opinion and perspective of the Working Group members.

Options that Did not Receive Enough Support to Warrant a Second Vote

Option 4: Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* a portion of each department's budget is assigned for use to support neighborhood priorities

0 Red, 1 Green, 3 Orange, 1 Yellow, 1 Small Orange, and 1 Blue = 26

Option 5: Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* some “discretionary” dollars *plus* a portion of each department's budget is assigned for use to support neighborhood priorities

0 Red, 2 Green, 1 Orange, 0 Yellow, 3 Small Orange, and 1 Blue = 28

Option 6: No funding for NRP program administration or neighborhoods

0 Red, 0 Green, 1 Orange, 4 Yellow, 0 Small Orange, and 2 Blue = 31

- **Staff Support**

(Note: Votes on the preferences in this section occurred at two different times. The first vote was held before any discussion of the Governance and Funding components occurred. The last discussion and vote occurred after the Governance and Funding options had been considered)

Option 1: An autonomous NRP (i.e. similar to the present system)

(First Vote) 2 Red, 4 Green, 1 Orange and 1 Yellow = 17

(Second Vote) 5 Red, 0 Green and 2 Orange = 11

Option 2: NRP in a new Office of Citizen Participation (in the City but not in CPED)

(First Vote) 3 Red, 3 Green, 2 Orange and 0 Yellow = 15

(Second Vote) 0 Red, 7 Green and 0 Orange = 14

The results showed a slight preference for “An autonomous NRP (i.e. similar to the present system)” The absence of detail and clarity about the functions and methods of operation for the second choice influenced the level of support that it received when the choices in this component were reconsidered.

Option 3: NRP as a program within the proposed Neighborhood and Community Planning division of the Community Planning and Economic Development office of the City (and at least some of the NRP staff becoming part of CPED)

(First Vote) 3 Red, 1 Green, 1 Orange and 3 Yellow = **20**

(Second Vote) 2 Red, 0 Green and 5 Orange = **17**

Options that Did not Receive Enough Support to Warrant a Second Vote

Option 4: No central staff

0 Red, 0 Green, 4 Orange and 4 Yellow = **28** points

This summary addresses the conclusions reached by the Group. The discussions and processes used to achieve these outcomes are presented more completely in the full report attached to this summary

At the Policy Board meeting on February 24 Deputy Mayor David Fey and the neighborhood representatives on the Working Group provided additional comments that they asked to have attached to the report. These items are included as Attachments D and E, respectively.

Attachment A

Participation in the Focus Minneapolis Working Group

Participant	Affiliation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL
Bastien, Greg	Neighborhood Rep. Alternate	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Burman, Julia	Neighborhood Rep. Alternate	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	8
Claypatch, Steve	Policy Board Union Alterbnate		X	X							2
Cooper, Bob	MCDA Rep		X	X	X		X	X			5
Evans, Debbie	Neighborhood Rep. Alternate						X	X	X	X	4
Fey, David	Mayor's Office Alternate	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Hofstede, Diane	Policy Board Chair	X	X		X	X					4
Kakos, Nick	Neighborhood Rep.							X		X	2
Laher, Byron	Policy Board United Way Rep.	X									1
McCarthy, Bill	Policy Board Union Rep.		X	X							2
Ostrow, Paul	Policy Board City Council Rep.						X		X		2
Pass, Carol	Neighborhood Rep.						X	X	X	X	4
Rhyan, Joyce	Planning Dept		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	7
Schneider, Jeff	City of Mpls CPED Rep.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	9
Schwartau, Judy	Neighborhood Rep. Alternate	X	X	X	X	X					5
Stomme, Lorrie	City Council Aide		X		X	X					3
Strand Jeff	Neighborhood Rep.		X	X							2
Takeshita Erik	Mayor's Office Aide	X									1
Total/Meeting		8	12	10	9	7	9	8	8	8	

Attachment B

NRP FUNCTIONS

	FUNCTION	CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY		
		NRP Staff	Nghd	Other
1.	Facilitate and assist development of neighborhood action plans	X	X	
2.	Provide dollars and professional/technical staff that support neighborhoods	X	X	X
3.	Facilitate inter and intra governmental and inter sector communication and coordination through the Policy Board	X	X	
4.	Implement approved neighborhood action plans:			
	a. Set priorities for implementation		X	
	b. Establish the scopes of service and budgets for activities carried out by neighborhoods	X	X	X
	c. Establish the scopes of service and budgets for activities carried out by departments	X	X	X
	d. Bring players together on interjurisdictional and inter sector activities	X	X	X
	e. Trouble shoot contracts in process and implementation	X		X
	f. Integrate multi-jurisdictional and inter sector efforts	X		X
	g. Facilitate collaboration	X	X	X
	h. Facilitate and make plan modifications	X	X	X
5.	Help neighborhoods navigate city and other jurisdictions during the plan development and implementation processes	X		
6.	Educate and inform neighborhood organizations and residents about the city, city programs, city processes and the MCDA role in development activities	X	X	X
7.	Engage and actively involve the community in planning at the neighborhood level		X	
8.	Organize and build the capacity of neighborhoods to perform community-based planning	X	X	X
9.	Develop and build citizenship and leadership in neighborhoods	X	X	
10.	Identify new solutions, strategies and policies and move them forward	X	X	
11.	Facilitate the sharing of information and knowledge across neighborhood boundaries	X	X	X
12.	Redirect governmental resources to neighborhood priorities			X
13.	Facilitate early and continuing identification of resident priorities		X	
14.	Test innovations proposed by neighborhoods	X		X

Attachment C

Pros and Cons for Each of the Component Options Addressed by the Working Group

Governance

Option 1a

NRP Policy Board remains as currently structured

Functions: NRP plan approval
Approval of NRP program policies and procedures
Management of NRP staff

Pros

- In times of uncertainty it maintains a strong identification with positive results in the community
- Continues connections to neighborhood and the sense of place created in Phase I
- Provides continuity
- Emphasizes relationship building
- Supports an established process that is in place and works
- Relationships with jurisdictions have been established
- Neighborhood organizations “know the drill”
- Structured and accepted review of neighborhood action plans
- Brings together people and organizational interests with varied assets, talents, relationships and experiences to better the NRP organization, much the same as corporate boards-corporate boards value the effect of outside influence as the majority of the board composition
- Involves broadest sectors of the community
- Multijurisdictional board compels members to talk to each other outside their fiefdoms
- Allows Neighborhoods access to and information sharing with all the jurisdictions-leads to better planning and collaboration
- NRP Board could be stronger and more streamlined with input and coordination from Planning Dept staff on neighborhood action plans and master plans to ensure compliance with the City Comp Plan and general City goals (2)
- Preserves neighborhood “ownership” of the program
- Strong message to residents and neighborhoods that they matter

Cons

- Top heavy with jurisdictions/foundations who put less in
- Relationship to the City is murky
- Weak connection to Planning Department-lack of coordination between neighborhood-level and citywide plans (2)

- Needs to increase ratio of neighborhood representation
- Areas covered by neighborhood reps are too large
- Doesn't integrate plans of other jurisdictions with City planning/policies
- Model works best when issue is approval of neighborhood plans-may not be best model to influence City development and services

Option 1b

NRP Policy Board remains *but with elected neighborhood representatives constituting 50% of the members*

Functions: NRP plan approval
Approval of NRP program policies and procedures
Management of NRP staff

Pros

- Structure is in place and we know how to work with it
- Change often postpones progress while adjustment occurs
- Greater coordination between neighborhood organizations (2)
- New paradigm for working with jurisdictions/greater accountability
- Greater neighborhood rep participation and impact
- Improves neighborhood awareness and involvement in overall City goals and planning (2)
- Brings the very local needs to attention of jurisdictions
- More neighborhood participation and control of decisions
- All the Pros of 1a

Cons

- Lopsided control by neighborhood organizations
- Removes some of the control over action plan approval from elected governmental bodies
- Potential loss of support/coordination with elected officials
- Politicized neighborhood rep elections
- Same as 1a
- Increase in the politics of board decision making

Option 2a

Expand/merge the Policy Board with the Planning Commission *with the same ratio of elected neighborhood representatives to other members as presently exists on the Policy Board.* The new Board would perform the functions of both the NRP Policy Board and the Planning Commission. (The new Board could delegate some of its activities to subcommittee(s)).

Functions: NRP plan approval
Approval of NRP program policies and procedures
Approval of City wide plans
Approval of site development/project plans

Approval of changes to existing policies/codes
Approval of permits, variances, etc
Location and design review (CLIC projects)
Approval of land sales

Pros

- Improved coordination of neighborhood level and city wide planning
- Allows neighborhood plans (and reps) to directly influence citywide planning and zoning policies
- Potential for cross fertilization of City and neighborhood action plans
- Brings citizens into “formal” planning process
- I can’t think of any

Cons

- Would probably require sub-committee to do some more detailed plan/variance/zoning review (not a big problem, though)
- May not be very effective
- Much more time consuming processes at times
- May not solve problems vs creating them
- Length of meetings
- Complexity of issues and process
- Could bog down NRP process with necessary Planning Commission minutiae
- Looking at list of duties (their meetings are already 4 hours long) this is a recipe for total gridlock
- Too much elected official influence compared to neighborhood organizations
- Empowerment of residents will be lost, therefore citizen participation will be reduced
- Not a sufficient improvement on current system to justify change
- Likelihood of fragmentation of neighborhood organizations and planning
- Bifurcated process between staff and citizens
- No clear review process for reviewing action plans

Option 2b

Expand/merge the Policy Board with the Planning Commission *but with elected neighborhood representatives constituting 50% of the members*. The new board would perform the functions of both the NRP Policy Board and the Planning Commission. (The new Board could delegate some of its activities to subcommittee(s)).

Functions: NRP plan approval
Approval of NRP program policies and procedures
Approval of City wide plans
Approval of site development/project plans
Approval of changes to existing policies/codes
Approval of permits, variances, etc.

Location and design review (CLIC projects)
Approval of land sales

Pros

- Expands the role of neighborhood planning to encompass the broad spectrum of city development and services-more than approval of NRP expenditures
- Adding more neighborhood representatives involves the neighborhoods more in the City's planning process
- Good information-sharing may lead to more collaborative environment
- Improved coordination of neighborhood level and city wide planning
- Allows neighborhood plans (and reps) to directly influence citywide planning and zoning policies
- Potential for a new planning paradigm with greater citizen participation
- Offers opportunity for collaborative decision making and plan review

Cons

- All of the cons of 2a (2)
- Not a viable option; functions of the Planning Commission and Policy Board are too different (2)
- Planning Commission's workload/productivity would be negatively affected by increase in size (2)
- Some of Planning Commission's functions (i e site plan and other reviews) may have minimal relevance to overall neighborhood planning (2)
- Too large and unwieldy to achieve any efficiency in decision making (2)
- Bifurcation of duties
- Difficulty of maintaining good and timely citizen/staff communications
- Political/neighborhood considerations in approving planning/variances
- Increased cost to the City; Planning Commission members are paid a stipend
- No clear process for reviewing neighborhood action plans

Option 2c (Added after Pros and Cons had been completed)

Policy Board is a subcommittee of the Planning Commission.

No Pros or Cons

Option 3

Dissolve the Policy Board and delegate responsibility for approval of NRP plans to the elected officials of each jurisdiction.

Pros

- Adoption of plans would ensure City support for priorities
- Encourages neighborhoods to lobby for approvals
- Improves connections between elected officials and neighborhoods

Cons

- What happens if jurisdictions disagree
- Jurisdictions need to talk to each other and neighborhoods-this alternative precludes this
- Elected officials could be less supportive of neighborhood plans that challenge City priorities or policies
- Lack of coordination and review of action plans
- Disjointed processes and different assessment criteria and tools
- Requires lobbying
- Further distances neighborhood planning from citywide planning and policy setting
- A board or overseeing body without significant independent outside control has difficulty “thinking outside the box”
- Would not bring outside interests to the table
- Neighborhoods need some discretionary \$’s that they have responsibility for allocating

After the Pros and Cons for each option were read to the Group by the facilitator, the Group decided that options 1a and 1b were variations of an Independent and Separate Policy Board and that 2a, 2b, and 2c were variations of a Combined Policy Board and Planning Commission. The Governance options reviewed were, therefore:

1. Independent and separate Policy Board;
2. Combined Policy Board and Planning Commission; and
3. No Policy Board

Funding/Financial Support

Option 1

No funding for NRP program administration or neighborhoods

Pros

- Saves money for City services and MCDA/CPED developments
- Reallocates dollars from expensive neighborhood administrative structures (68 groups)

Cons

- Loss of neighborhood organization citizen participation and capacity
- Loss of action plans and identification of “local” issues
- City vs. neighborhood antagonism
- Does not maintain Phase I investment in citizen/civic infrastructure
- Loss of neighborhood identity
- Loss of neighborhood sense of ownership/control/results/belonging
- Loss of neighborhood confidence (2)
- Loss of extreme leveraging of taxpayer dollars

Option 2

Funding for neighborhood capacity only

Pros

- Better than nothing
- Neighborhood work could still continue on action plans
- Neighborhoods could serve as a communication loop for the City
- Shifts focus from spending limited NRP dollars to influencing City’s whole budget with neighborhood planning and input
- Focusing on building/maintaining capacity may be more effective over a wider range of City decisions
- Emphasizes building effectiveness of neighborhood organizations as part of City’s decision-making process on all policies and programs

Cons

- Only the stronger neighborhoods have capacity to fund themselves-new American neighborhoods cannot sustain an appropriate level of fundraising
- Only slightly better than nothing
- Stronger neighborhoods are more comfortable with this-“left behinds” are not
- No seed money for projects
- No seat at the table for neighborhoods without money
- Pits neighborhoods against each other for funds
- No incentive for neighborhoods to cooperate on action plans

- Loss of volunteer base without projects and ability to influence implementation
- Top down project funding decisions
- Will citizens remain active without control over some dollars
- Loss of extreme leveraging of taxpayer dollars

Option 3

Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* some “discretionary” dollars (i.e. less than the current amount but more than for admin only)

Pros

- Preserves some incentive to participate for those focused on “our dollars”
- Could force coordination between neighborhoods on action plans
- Continued capacity to identify and leverage funds for projects
- Keeps communication open between groups
- A possible compromise between status quo and no program dollars (“half a loaf”)

Cons

- Significantly reduces benefit of very high leveraging of tax dollars- what other agency leverages to this extent?
- Limited “discretionary” dollars may pull neighborhood organizations focus from larger neighborhood and citywide issues (lots of energy spent doing small things)
- Diminished community planning
- More central control of funds
- Loss of flexibility
- Will citizens remain active with fewer dollars than they have currently?
- Does not follow through on 1990 “promise”
- Not enough-the center (i.e. the City) needs to share!

Option 4

Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* significant “discretionary” dollars (i.e. the status quo)

Pros

- Allows significant leveraging of taxpayer dollars
- Balanced by council approval and Policy Board review
- Provides neighborhood organization flexibility in planning and implementing projects
- Gives neighborhoods “ownership” of projects
- Allows neighborhood organizations to make sound decisions that will have a positive impact on the physical condition of the neighborhood
- Participation increases with funding for implementation unless you want only people who love to chit chat at meetings (2)

- Neighborhoods with their own money can compel responsiveness from departments
- Capitalizes volunteer efforts
- Neighborhoods should have significant say in how funds are spent in their neighborhoods to meet local priorities (2)
- Neighborhoods can be proactive and constructive in addressing their needs
- Priorities need to be more bottom up than top down (2)
- Provides greater credibility for public expenditures
- Departments budget amplification depends on responsiveness to neighborhoods-this introduces market competitiveness into service delivery and can result in more appropriate and improved services
- Creates a federation of neighborhoods under overarching planning of the City-provides two levels of focus (a very local and a general)
- Creates a market economy for neighborhoods allowing them to shop for the cheapest, most efficient delivery of services and programs they need
- Most inclusive option-it is the only arrangement that gives the poorest neighborhoods economic power to compete with the richer neighborhoods

Cons

- Projected discretionary revenue insufficient to sustain this (2)
- Waste of funds
- Maintains current focus on miniscule portion (1%) of City budget

Option 5

Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* a portion of each departments budget is assigned for use to support neighborhood priorities

Pros

- May “force” departments and neighborhoods to work together (2)
- Creates new funding source for NRP
- Draws NRP and Planning Departments together

Cons

- No incentive for performance
- No improvement in efficiency
- May eliminate seed dollars for neighborhood priorities
- Loss of flexibility for neighborhood organizations
- Loss of range and ability of neighborhood organizations to address local issues
- Departments refuse projects because of neighborhood involvement
- Possibility that neighborhoods will be “forced” to take what the department offers or :get nothing”
- Impact of budget deficit

- Forces neighborhoods to spend within departments and according to their priorities and may not address neighborhood needs
- Challenge of staying within capital accounts, when not necessary
- Hard to picture how depts would incorporate neighborhood direction (68 sets of priorities/timelines) into their annual work plans and budgets
- Neighborhood “portion” of each dept. budget would be insufficient to have impact
- Compels neighborhoods to work with city depts but removes incentive for responsive delivery by depts (neighborhoods have no other options)
- Ties neighborhood agenda to departments which have no neighborhood representation
- Does not allow efficiencies that could occur through competition

Option 6

Funding for neighborhood capacity *plus* some “discretionary” dollars *plus* a portion of each departments budget is assigned for use to support neighborhood priorities

Pros

- Provides the opportunity to do larger projects by leveraging dept. dollars and neighborhood dollars (2)
- Greater potential to influence City depts
- Identifies depts As another source of dollars
- Forces neighborhood organizations and depts To prioritize projects (2)
- Innovation in dept. planning may occur

Cons

- Higher administrative costs
- Loss of neighborhood organization flexibility
- More time consuming to get dollars to neighborhoods
- Difficult to administer, calculate, and comprehend (2)
- Too disjointed
- Forces neighborhoods to use dept. dollars when that may not be the neighborhood priority
- May not allow for seed money for neighborhood’s priorities
- Confusing
- Does not allow for market competition
- Most of the same problems as Option 5 with only minor alleviation by the availability of discretionary funds

Staff/Staff Support

Option 1

An autonomous NRP (i.e. similar to the present system)

Pros

- Retains the autonomy of the NRP Director
- Maintains the commitment of other jurisdictions
- Known quantity, staff and function aligned
- Ability to coordinate interjurisdictional issues/developments
- Preserves neighborhood “ownership” of the program
- Creates professional advocacy group (champions for neighborhoods when necessary)
- Encourages neighborhood confidence
- Preserves neighborhood staff knowledge base with central staff
- Proven successful-least costly in the short term
- Retaining the current model allows stability in a time of change and challenge (this may actually save money as well)
- High resident buy-in
- Allows for broader representation and direction
- Autonomous/independent voice for neighborhoods has proven effective in engaging a wide range of partners/jurisdictions
- Strong message to residents and neighborhoods that they matter
- Multijurisdictional
- Neighborhood based and controlled planning and implementation
- Internationally and nationally recognized program
- Established and working
- Trusted and understood-works within and with different organizations and systems
- Educated residents on how agencies work and how to work with them
- Neighborhood dedicated and resident directed funding
- If it ain’t broke, why are we trying to fix it
- Continuity
- Don’t throw the baby out with the bath water
- Independent:
 - Has the ability to effectively work outside the city structure
 - Advocates for residents and neighborhoods

Cons

- Continues the autonomy of the NRP Director
- Isolated from other City functions
- Other jurisdictions are no longer putting in dollars
- Other jurisdictions have less stake in success or failure than the City and less rationale for providing funds
- Competition for control
- Preserves “us vs. them” dynamic (City vs NRP)
- Is also a bureaucracy without internal checks on dealings with neighborhoods

- More vulnerable to attack (either by the Council or legislature) especially during the current budget crunch
- No guarantee of funding or funding source
- Not enough coordination with City departments

Option 2

NRP as a program within the proposed Neighborhood and Community Planning division of the Community Planning and Economic Development office of the City

Pros

- Eliminates the autonomy of the NRP Director (from meeting #6)
- Streamlines staffing and coordination (from meeting #6)
- Improved coordination of departments and services
- Possible access to larger development issues
- Makes communication of and alignment with city wide goals easier to accomplish
- Allows flexible staffing as resources diminish
- Planning technical expertise “in-house” saves dollars
- Neighborhood data base management system with direct access
- Ensures greater linkage to city goals and compliance with the Minneapolis Plan
- Provides a structure through which City departments can work more closely together
- Strengthens City planning through closer involvement with neighborhoods
- Would facilitate coordination of all neighborhood programs/services
- Cost effective
- Increases new departments connection with neighborhoods

Cons

- Eliminates the autonomy of the NRP Director
- Reduces the commitment of other jurisdictions
- Dilution of NRP function with other planning functions
- Dilution, also, by focus on development, narrowly-defined
- Limited staffing capacity
- Non-geographic based planning
- Encourages competition between neighborhoods/City departments for funding
- NCP will be a subset of CPED
- Loss of NRP identity (“brand”)
- Ultimately decision-making power will involve an RFP process resembling LCDA, with competition and not collaboration among neighborhoods
- Costly start-up and implementation and organizing difficulties
- Is not empowered to help direct City goals
- Local needs are absorbed into over general needs of the City causing neglect of highly specific needs (i.e. Nokomis water quality)

- Loss of impetus for citizen participation because final discretion over dollars (and therefore projects) is ceded to central bureaucracy
- Loss of vast numbers of volunteer hours
- Potential loss of continuity, capacity and resident recognition of NRP Board

Option 3

No central staff

Pros

- Neighborhood staffing of NRP program
- Saves dollars
- Removes a layer of “bureaucracy” and potential conflicts between City staff roles/perspectives
- Could be part of making the case that all departments need to be more citizen Focused (the Pollyanna defense)
- Devolves control to the neighborhood level
- Encourages more volunteers

Cons

- Fragmented and difficult to coordinate
- Requires staff capacity at neighborhood level to be strong and consistent
- Questions concerning credibility and accountability
- No professional advocacy for neighborhoods as a group
- No coordination of multi-neighborhood programs
- Decrease in community participation/outreach
- Lack of coordinated program control
- No fiscal accountability
- No coordination of neighborhood education, capacity building or collaboration
- How would accountability occur

Option 4

NRP in a new Office of Citizen Participation (in the City but not in CPED)

Pros

- Maintains NRP’s broad scope of activity
- Assists in achieving goal of bringing neighborhoods into City decision making process and delivery of services
- Could expand development issues within the City while maintaining ability to work interjurisdictionally
- Elevates importance of citizen engagement beyond “just” NRP to all City functions

- Leads to true system change
- Broader focus for “citizen” participation
- Not as vulnerable to political and financial changes as a stand-alone program

Cons

- Staff can lose focus (from meeting #6)
- Subject to City pressures on the budget
- Loss of interjurisdictional function
- May be hard to envision/sell (paradigm shift)
- Less focus on neighborhoods
- Loss of NRP identity (“brand”)
- Neighborhoods will be competing with other City programs for funding
- Loss of advocacy by NRP professional staff
- Loss of a “power position” at the table
- Pressures of City budgetary constraints
- Top down admin

Cc: CPED Project Advisory Team